

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 060655Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8452

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT BAGHDAD

S E C R E T SANA 2297

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YE

SUBJ: YAR DEALINGS WITH IRAQ

REF: SANA 1952

SUMMARY. YARG HAS LONG RECOGNIZED IRAQIS AS POTENT
SUBVERSIVE ELEMENT IN YEMEN BUT TRIED TO PROPITIATE RATHER
THAN OPPOSE THIS THREAT. YEMENIS ARE GOING TO KEEP ON
TRYING, TOO, ALTHOUGH
THEY HAVE MOVED IN TO ARRESTSOME
LOCAL IRAQI AGENTS.

1. YAR PRESIDENT HAMDHI HAS FOLLOWED POLICY IN LAST YEAR
OF SEEKING TO REDUCE REAL OR POTENTIAL AID WHICH IRAQ

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PROVIDES BA'ATHI AND OTHER FOES OF YARG. THUS, DESPITE

FRESH AND BITTER MEMORIES OF IRAQI INVOLVEMENT IN 1974 COUP ATTEMPT AGAINST HAMDI, YAR PRESIDENT TRAVELLED EARLY THIS YEAR TO IRAQ IN EFFORT TO MEND FENCES. HE THOUGHT HE HAD SUCCEEDED.

2. IRAQIS SUBSEQUENTLY ANNOUNCED NEW SERIES OF AID PROJECTS FOR YEMEN. HAMDI THOUGHT HE ALSO HAD ASSUREANCES THAT IRAQI DIPLOMATIS HERE WOULD FOLLOW CONCILIATORY RELATIONSHIP WITH YARG.

3. IN LAST THREE OR FOUR MONTHS, HOWEVER, INFLOW FUNDS FROM IRAQ HAS REPORTEDLY REACHED LEVELS THAT CAN ONLY BE ASSOCIATED WITH EFFORT TO OVERTHROW LOCAL GOVERNMENT. IRAQI CHARGE WAS QUIETLY DIRECTED TO LEAVE LAST MONTH. HAMDI HAS ALSO FINALLY BEGUN INTERNAL CRACKDOWN WITH NUMBER OF ARRESTS INCLUDING MAN REGARDED AS LOCAL RING LEADER, MOHAMMAD SHUKRI. ASNAJ SAID THERE HAVE BEEN "OTHER ARRESTS TOO."

4. ACCORDING TO YARG FOREIGN MINISTER ABDULLAH AL-ASNAJ, HOWEVER IN TALK WITH AMBASSADOR ON JULY 2, YAR INTENDS "TO LEAVE DOOR OPEN" TO BETTER RELATIONS WITH IRAQ. MEANS TO DO THIS IS CONTINUED EFFORT TO COURT QASSIM SALAM, A YEMEN-BORN IRAQI CITIZEN WHOM ASNAJ CLAIMS IS "NUMBER 4" IN BAGHDAD REGIME. ASNAJ SAYS ALTHOUGH QASSIM SALAM VERY ACTIVE IN IRAQ, AND SIGNS AGREEMENTS WITH SOVIET UNION ON BEHALF OF BOTH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ, HE HAS ALSO LONG TAKEN A VERY ACTIVE INTEREST IN YEMEN. HE WAS, THEREFORE, INVITED TO COME BACK TO YEMEN LAST MONTH AS GUEST OF YARG. (SEE SANA 1952) THIS, ASNAJ HOPES, WILL CONFUSE (AND HELP IDENTIFY) QASSIM SALAM'S FRIENDS HERE, AND PERHAPS START A PROCESS OF CO-OPTING HIM. ASNAJ ALSO SAID THAT IRAQI DEVELOPMENT AID MIGHT CONTINUE TO FLOW INTO YARG COFFERS AS RESULT OF THIS TACTIC, AND HE HOPES, PERHAPS DIVIDE FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR SUBVERSION HERE. COMMENT. INTERNAL CLAMPDOWN BY YARG AND PNG'ING OF IRAQI DIPLOMAT PUTS YARG-IRAQI RELATIONS AT IMPASSE. WE DOUBT THAT YEMENI CONNECTION OF QASSIM SALAM, OR WILLINGNESS OF YARG TO CONTINUE DEAL WITH IRAQIS, WILL MODERATE ANTIREGIME EFFORTS ALREADY LAUNCHED HERE. IRAQI MAY, IN FACT, SECRET

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INTEND TO INCREASE EFFORTS. TRAVEL ABROAD OF IRAQI CLIENTS ABU LUHUM, ABDALLAH BIN HUSSAIN AND ABU SHUWARIB (SEPTTEL) LENDS INTELS TO THIS INTERPRETATION. WE ARE, AT SAME TIME, HARD PUT TO UNDERSTAND WHY IRAQIS SHOULD CARE SO MUCH ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE. PERHAPS SOVIETS ARE PUSHING THEM. PERHAPS THEY WANT TO MAKE PROBLEMS FOR THE SAUDIS. PERHAPS IRAQI SECURITY ORGANS ARE ABLE TO ACT INDEPENDENTLY AND EVEN IN OPPOSITION TO OTHER PARTS OF IRAQI

GOVERNMENT.
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